THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE

JAZZ INFORMATION

VOL. I, No. 14 DECEMBER 15, 1939 TEN CENTS

ALL-STAR BAND RECORDS FOR VARSITY

An all-star mixed band recorded four sides for United States Records Thursday (December 14) under the supervision of Warren Scholl, new U. S. talent man.

The band included Benny Carter, alto sax and trumpet; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Ulysses Livingston, guitar; and Danny Polo, clarinet; Joe Sullivan, piano; George Wettling, drums. Jeanne Burns was the vocalist.

The tunes tentatively chosen to be recorded were: Tight Like That, Save It Pretty Mama, Easy Rider, and a boogie woogie number. The records are to be released on the Varsity label, under a name not yet selected.

Toots Mondello, star altoist now with Benny Goodman, will have his second recording date for Varsity on Monday (December 17). Four solo sides are to be cut, with an accompaniment furnished by Claude Thornhill, piano, and Nick Fatool, drums.

SULLIVAN ADDS COLORED TRUMPETER

Andy Anderson, trumpet, has replaced Murphy Steinberg in Joe Sullivan's band, at Cafe Society, New York. This change leaves Sullivan and Danny Polo, tenor sax, the only white musicians in the band.

The second Monday night jam session at Cafe Society featured James P. Johnson, piano; Bobby Sands, sax; Joe Thomas, trumpet; Vic Dickinson, trombone; Tiny Watts, bass; and Yank Porter, drums.

New York

NEW YORK, Dec. 14. -- Present schedule for "Spirituals To Swing" concert, to be held at Carnegie on Christmas Eve, calls for Goodman, Basie, the three Boogie Woogie boys and Joe Turner from Cafe Society, Ida Cox, Big Bill, Sister Tharpe, Sonny Terry, James P. Johnson, and the Golden Gate Singers. Sterling Brown will m. c. John Hammond, who is producing the concert, may bring one more surprise artist from the South.

Shorty Sherock, trumpet with Bob Crosby's orchestra, is on notice, and will be out by Christmas. The band is playing the Windsor Theater in the Bronx this week, and goes in the Hotel New Yorker on January 8. Mildred Bailey is to sing with the band on its Camel radio show when it moves to NBC in January.

Following the story that Sulli-

(Continued on Page Four)

DISCOGRAPHY SUPPLEMENT IN WORK

Charles Delaunay, who compiled the first two editions of Hot Discography, is now at work on a supplement to the second edition, according to a letter from France, received in New York last week.

Delaunay is not, as had been reported, in the front lines of the war, but instead has been located in an anti-aircraft battery in a quiet sector, near Paris. There his spare time is devoted to working on the supplement, which will include corrections and additions to the 1938 edition as well as a list of records issued since May, 1938.

There is also some possibility that the Discography itself, which has been out of print for several months, may go into a second printing.

SWING DREAM HAS RUDE AWAKENING

Swingin' The Dream, modern production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Center Theater, New York, closed Saturday night, December 9, eleven days after opening.

Louis Armstrong, Maxine Sullivan, the Benny Goodman Sextet, and Bud Freeman's orchestra were featured in the show.

STILL MORE SPANIER RECORDS

Muggsy Spanier's Ragtime Band had its fourth recording date for Bluebird in New York December 12, two days after it left Nick's.

The titles recorded were: Black and Blue, Lonesome Road, Mandy and Dinah. Personnel for the date was Spanier, cornet; George Brunies, trombone; Rod Cless, clarinet; Nick Caiazza, tenor sax; Joe Bushkin, piano; Bob Casey, bass; Al Seidel, drums.

Since leaving Nick's, Muggsy's plans are indefinite. Joe Bushkin has left to play a solo Novachord at the Seven Eleven, and Caiazza will probably join Woody Herman.

COMMODORE RELEASES NEW WAXING

The first two of the sides recently recorded by Eddie Conson's Band will be released early next week by the Commodore Music Shops.

Strut Miss Lizzie, listed among the important records of the year by Life magazine, will be coupled with It's Right Here For You. Two other sides, Ballin' The Jack and I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of

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SUMMA CUM LAUDES GO INTO 7-11; DAVE TOUGH BACK WITH BAND

Freeman On Fifth Avenue; Bushkin To Be Featured

Bud Freeman and the Summa Cum Laude Orchestra, late of Nick's and Swingin' The Dream, open Wednesday (December 10) at the Seven Eleven Bar on 55th Street, east of Fifth Avenue, New York.

The Seven Eleven, which had not previously featured dance orchestras, has given over its late evening hours to the management of Paul Smith, who was associated with the Friday Club jam sessions last year. Smith is bringing in Freeman and Joe Bushkin, formerly pianist with Muggsy Spanier, who will play the Novachord between sets.

Dave Tough, Chicago drummer who played with Freeman for some time at Nick's, joins him again at the Seven Eleven. Besides Freeman and Tough the band includes Max Kaminsky, Pee Wee Russell, Brad Gowans, and Eddie Condon.

ZUTTY SINGLETON BACK AT NICK'S

Zutty Singleton, who drummed for Bud Freeman in Swingin' The Dream, returns to Nick's Tavern in Greenwich Village, New York, on Sunday (December 17), with a new quartet including Albert Nicholas on clarinet, Sam Allen on piano, and Dick Fulbright, bass.

Also playing at Nick's is the Original Dixieland Band, now led by drummer Tony Sbarbaro. Tony spells his name "Spargo" these days.

Chicago

CHICAGO, Dec. 10. -- The Windy City is full of good music right now. Last week Duke Ellington played to a record-breaking crowd at the Savoy Ballroom. It was so crowded that the Duke couldn't get from the front door to the bandstand, and was consequently forty-five minutes late. Rex played too wild; otherwise, the band was perfect for me. However, I missed Ivy Anderson.

Jimmy Noone is filling the Cabin Inn with his clarinet and his band. Trumpets: Leon Scott, D. Brockman, Dalton Nickerson; trombone: Al Williams; reeds: Frank Owen, Warren Smith, Moses Gant; bass: William Anderson; piano: Gideon Oneray; drums: Jimmy MacEncee; guitar: John Henly. The band did have a New York wire, but lost it.

Boyce Brown is still playing his alto sax at the Liberty Inn. Stuff

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JAZZ INFORMATION

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COLLECTORS' ITEMS

In the "Collectors' Corner" of the December 11th issue of Tempo, George Avakian quotes Jazz Information as having said that the English Parlophone Company has destroyed the unissued master of Louis Armstrong's "I'm Gonna Stomp Mr. Henry Lee". Just to keep the record straight, our story (in the November 24 J. I.) began by saying that "the master..is still missing" and went on to report that F. Sinclair Traill had written Steve Smith of the H. R. S. that "the master, recently reported to be in the possession of the English Parlophone Company, can not be found."

A letter from an officer of the Parlophone Company to Mr. Traill stated that the master was "not available". The implication that the master has been destroyed was not made by Jazz Information.

* * *

Harry E. Avery of Alameda, California, writes us concerning a previously unlisted Williams Blue Five item featuring Louis Armstrong. It is Sara Martin's "I'm Gonna Hoodoo You --- Your Going Ain't Giving Me The Blues", Okeh 8270, master numbers 73-773 and 73-774 respectively. Armstrong is very prominent, he says, in both intros.

He adds still another unlisted Ma Rainey, "Dream Blues" (1699) -- "Lost Wandering Blues" (1698), on Paramount 12098, with accompaniment by the Pruitt twins, guitars; and adds the following correction for Discography: J.H. Shayne plays the piano accompaniment for Priscilla Stewart on one side only of Paramount 12224, "Mr. Freddie Blues", 1832. On the reverse, "Mecca Flat Blues" (239), the pianist is Jimmy Blythe.

Referring to Mamie Smith's "Lady Luck Blues -- Kansas City Man Blues", mentioned by George Hoefer in a recent Downbeat as a Bechet accompaniment, Avery comments that Bechet plays soprano sax, not clarinet, on both sides; and that "his introduction to the Lady Luck side is truly one of the most beautiful things he has ever done. Clarence Williams is undoubtedly on piano, with, I suppose, Christian on banjo." The record is Okeh 4926, master numbers 71-725 and 71-726 respectively, and the label gives the accompaniment simply as the Harlem Trio. Can someone supply the master numbers of the King Bechet Trio, on Okeh 8096, "Lonesome Woman Blues -- Down On The Levee Blues", which might conceivably be adjacent?

Avery also asks for information on two records: Louis Dumaine and his Jazzola Eight, Victor 20580, "Franklin St. Blues -- Red Onion Drag", and George McClennon's Jazz Devils on Okeh 8236, "Home Alone Blues" (73-359) and "Anybody Here Want To Try My Cabbage" (73-360). The piano solos on the latter were played by Eddie Heywood, old Butterbeans and Susie pianist and father of the pianist of that name who now plays with Benny Carter.

Of interest to hot fans on the west coast is the news, also contained in Mr. Avery's letter, that the first meeting of the Hot Music Society of Northern California was held in San Francisco recently. In the course of the evening, he says, some fine music was heard, the best coming from a mixed band led by Vernon Alley, colored bass player, and featuring a very fine colored pianist, Don Anderson.

* * *

The following comes from John H. Baker of Columbus, Ohio:

"In the December first issue of Jazz Information I was interested in a reference to the Carolina Dandies' recording of "When I Can't Be With You" and "Come Easy, Go Easy, Love" on Victor 22776 and the comment that Carl Kraft thinks same sound like McKinney's Cotton Pickers. This record is in my personal collection, and the several local collectors who have heard it agree with me that the aggregation is probably a white and colored pick-up outfit, and that Jackson Teagarden is the trombone soloist on "When", and the vocalist on "Come Easy". With the exception of the solos by the inimitable Teagarden, the performances are ragged and sloppy and, although it follows the McKinney style and pattern, it definitely is not that orchestra.

"Could some of your readers identify and supply me with personnels on some of the following records in my collection, or confirm my tentative identifications?

1. "West End Blues" by Chuck Nelson and His Boys on Champion 40016-A, master 14837. I have guessed this to be a reissue of Champion 15714 by Smoke Jackson and his Red Onions. Trumpets sound like King Oliver and Louis Armstrong.

2. "Dere's Jazz In Dem Dere Horns" and "Woe Is Me" by the Cotton Pickers on Vocalion 3263, masters 19329 and 19328. This disc is no great shakes but I just am curious to know who, besides Tommy Dorsey on trombone, is included in the personnel. It definitely is a different group from the old Nichols-Mole gang using that name.

3. "Ain't She Sweet" and "Somebody Stole My Gal" by Brian Lawrance and His Quartet on Champion 40034, masters GB 7026-11 and GB 7045-11. This sounds like an all-star white pick-up gang among which I can positively identify Joe Venuti's violin (and possibly vocal on "Somebody"), Eddie Lang guitar, and Adrian Rollini, bass sax. Piano and accordion are fine also. The latter has a style identical to that of the accordionist on Ray Miller's recording of "Angry" on Brunswick 4224. Piano could hardly be anyone else but Joe Sullivan, judging by the style.

4. "Don't Be Angry" and "If You Knew Susie" by Billy Mason and his Orchestra on Champion 40035, masters TB 1790-11 and TB 1789-11. This sounds like the Chocolate Dandies gang and I am sure that I have correctly identified Benny Carter on alto, Coleman Hawkins and Henry Allen as being on this disc. The piano is especially fine, but no one who heard it can identify it positively, although we lean to the opinion that it is Fletcher Henderson.

5. Eddie Cole's Solid Swingers appearing on Decca 7210 and 7215 in "Thunder", "Honey Hush", "Bedtime" and "Stomping At The Panama". It is probable that this is a Cozy Cole pick-up gang, but who else is in it?

6. Connie McLean and his Rhythm Orchestra on Bluebird B-6482. The A side is "High Falutin' Stomp" (Ray Durant) V C by Alex Miller; and the B side is "All I Want In This World Is You" (Bill Woods) V C by Alex Miller and Chubby Wright. This recording interests me because the fine alto sounds like Tab Smith, my favorite. I should like the alto, trumpet and piano identified, although the latter is, I admit, sloppy.

"I have another record which I have never seen mentioned in any collector's publication or discography, which I believe it would be very fitting to mention in Jazz Information. It is Brunswick 7086 with "Stomp 'Em Down To The Bricks" by Henry Brown accompanied on guitar by Pickens on one side; and "Malt Can Blues" by Ike Rogers and his Biddle Street Boys on the other. On the latter side the only accompaniment I can detect to Ike's trombone is Henry Brown's piano."

Mr. Baker also reminds us that the six Wingy Mannone sides issued

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NEW RECORDS

JIM YANCEY (Solo Art 12008) Jimmy's Stuff -- The Fives.

Let us say first that no recommendation of this record could be too strong, and that no praise can be too high for Dan Qualey, who made and issued it. There's no need to repeat here the story of Jimmy Yancey, which William Russell told very competently in his chapter on the Boogie Woogie in Jazzmen. Yancey has been playing piano for more than twenty years; his part in the development of the boogie woogie was vital; and these solos, recorded last summer in Chicago, are the first records he has ever made.

That alone makes this a memorable release, without considering the quality of the music. It should be observed that Yancey, the pioneer, has never been a professional pianist. It was as a dancer that he toured the vaudeville circuits (and performed before royalty); now he works in a ball park in Chicago. Some of the finest jazz musicians have been pretty popular in their time (and success usually finished their contribution to music); but perhaps there may be something in the thought that, just as the most commercial aspects of jazz are the least fruitful from a musical standpoint, some of the greatest achievements have come from the amateur league.

After hearing these solos it is hard to agree with Mr. Russell that Yancey today has more technique than most of the boogie woogie pianists. Jimmy is far from young; he doesn't play regularly; and there are some small evidences of this in his playing. And that doesn't seem very important. Yancey might have made better solos ten years ago, perhaps (though they wouldn't have been as well recorded); but he did not. The Fives and Jimmy's Stuff are great blues, which evidence the fine genius, unquestionable taste, and endless creative powers of Jim Yancey.

The Fives will be familiar to blues followers. Jimmy's composition, its phrases and rhythms, have been borrowed by countless blues men, known and forgotten. Yancey's own version has great drive, and a powerful climax. When the ending comes there's nothing left to say, and Jimmy skips out of the key to finish with what sounds like a satirical version of the dance band's closing fanfare. And let's have no nonsense about melancholy. This is the happiest music in the world.

The Fives, probably, will give more sustained pleasure; but the other solo, Jimmy's Stuff, is no less fascinating. Slower, it employs a left-hand figure somewhat like Meade Lux's Yancey Special, but simpler and more varied. With the easier tempo, Yancey shows all his rhythmic ingenuity and his invention, playing with a grand rock. Comparison with the Meade Lux record makes Yancey appear, not less intellectual, but a man who places less value on intellect. The conception is not as tightly worked out, and there is that much more room for free development. The Yancey Special seems complete in itself, while Jimmy's Stuff is just a slice of the blues.

HOT CLUB OF FRANCE QUINTET (Royale 1798) Chasin' Shadows -- I've Had My Moments. Stephane Grappelly, violin; Django Reinhardt, solo guitar; Joseph Reinhardt, Pierre Ferret, guitars; Louis Vola, bass. Recorded in Paris, October 1935.

Django Reinhardt's long guitar solo in Chasin' Shadows is a masterpiece of its kind - wonderfully conceived and executed, played with matchless spirit and, of course, technique. The tune is sentimentally lovely, but Django's improvisations on it are genuinely memorable. Without falling into a discussion of the nature of jazz, we might suggest that the quality of his work, in spite of superficial resemblances of form, is much closer to the genius of the Spanish guitarists than to hot music.

Grappelly's talent is considerably less. The reverse of the record is almost entirely corny.

LIONEL HAMPTON'S ORCHESTRA (Vi 26-423) The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin' The Town -- Gin For Christmas.

Personnel for first side: Henry Allen, trumpet; J. C. Higginbotham, trombone; Earl Bostic, saxophone; Clyde Hart, piano; Charlie Christian, guitar; Artie Bernstein, bass; Sidney Catlett, drums; Lionel Hampton, vibraharp and vocal. Whatever good music might be produced by a date band like this is spoiled by Hampton's inevitable vocal, which is particularly horrible this time. Red Allen isn't given much to do, but Higginbotham comes out from the vibraphone tinklings to play a fine solo, full of dignity and feeling: characteristics not shared by the rest of the record.

Personnel for second side: Ziggy Elman, trumpet; Toots Mondello, Ben Webster, Jerry Jerome, saxes; Clyde Hart, piano; Al Casey, guitar; Artie Bernstein, bass; Lionel Hampton, drums. This side is by a bigger combination, which reaches a fair degree of excitement contributed by the sax section's fast riffing, Lionel's powerful, nervous drumming, and the Elman trumpet.

TOOTS MONDELLOS Orchestra (Varsity 8110) Sweet Lorraine -- Beyond The Moon. Ziggy Elman, trumpet; Toots Mondello, Noni Bernardi, alto saxes; Jerry Jerome, tenor sax; Claude

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"I FOUND A NEW PAPER!"

"I have just finished reading your little paper, which you were so kind as to send me, and I was greatly elated to learn of the existence of a publication so evidently rooted in the earth of non-commercial jazz."

--- H. L., Long Beach, L. I.

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NEW RECORDS

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Thornhill, piano; Carl Kress, guitar; Joe Swarzman, bass; Al Kendis, drums.

These are quite passable pops, not at all exceptional but better than other Mondello date bands on other labels. Sweet Lorraine comes at a good tempo, and features some of Toots' fine alto work. Neither side has a vocal.

CHARLIE BARNET'S Orchestra (BB 10-511) Night Glow --A Lover Is Blue. The Ellington treatment, applied to Jacques Dallin's Night Glow, produces an interesting side. This is a heavily arranged "mood" piece, with only one solo (by Barnet, on alto). Still not nearly as good as the Duke for a number of reasons. The ensemble performance has distinct weaknesses, the arrangement has a few parts that don't fit it, and the rhythm section is much less interesting than Ellington's.

BOB CHESTER'S Orchestra (BB 10513) Aunt Hagar's Blues --- 57th Street Drag. The first non-pop sides by this new white band show not much distinction, but have the advantage of simple arrangements, played with a good degree of restraint. Trumpet plays well on both sides; the first title is much the better.

POOR BILL (Varsity 6020) Way Up On The Mountain -- A Hundred Women. One of the first race records listed by Varsity, and a very good one. Poor Bill (William White) sings in the folk blues style, falsetto and all, with a very interesting guitar accompaniment.

SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON (BB 8307) Little Low Woman Blues --- Doggin' My Love Around. Sonny Boy sings the blues with a good voice and plenty of energy; the piano and guitar give him a strong background. But the star of this disc is an accompanist who really bites into a harmonica, with a fine talent for getting some blues out of that little instrument. You might call it the muted-mouth organ style.

OLLIE SHEPARD and his Kentucky Boys (De 7665) King Of All Evil -- It's My Time Now. Shepard reappears on the race list to sing two blues in his excellent voice, and with his fine talent for phrasing. The accompaniment, by tenor sax, piano, and drums, is in the mood. On both sides the singer complains about his woman, threatening her on the first with a horrible death.

NEW FRIENDS OF RHYTHM (Vi 26425) Shoot The Schubert To Me Hubert -- Goulash. Sylvan Schulman, Zelly Smirnoff, violins; Louis Kievman, viola; Alan Shulman, cello; Harry Patent, bass; Tony Colucci, guitar; Laura Newell, harp.

This is a "Swing Classic".

Art Hodes' piano solos of South Side Shuffle and Ross Tavern Boogie, also released this week by Solo Art, will be reviewed next week in Jazz Information.

COLLECTORS' ITEMS

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on Champion were reissued on Decca race list, Nos. 7366, 7415 and 7425. The clarinetist on these records, Ted May of New York informs us, is Slats Long.

* * *

Dave Stuart, who just opened the Jazz Man Record Shop in Hollywood, gives us three blues records which have piano accompaniment by Lemuel Fowler: Helen McDonald, on Gennett 5193, "Squakin' (?) The Blues --- You've Got Everything A Sweet Mama Needs", masters 8431 and 8432 respectively, and Clara Smith's "How'm I Doin'" (142250) -- "Whip It To A Jelly" (142251), Columbia 14150, and "Percolatin' Blues" (143140)-- "Ease It" (143141), Columbia 14202.

Several collectors have asked about Harmony 248-H, by the Blue Grass Footwarmers, "Old Folks Shuffle" (142330) - "Charleston Hound" (142307). Does anyone know anything definite concerning it?

CHICAGO THIS WEEK

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Smith, Jonah Jones, George Clark, Luke Stewart, Herbert Cowans, Eric Henry and John Brown are playing a lot of music in the Off-Beat Club. A few too many numbers necessitating hats, but otherwise fine.

John Long gigging on the South Side with Bob Shoffner and Preston Jackson. Fine band, but they were replaced recently at the 5100 Club by Horace Henderson... John Kirby's band still at the swank Pump Room of the Ambassador, and still very popular... Earl Hines at the Terrace with the same band, Fuller, Bud Johnson, Mousy Burrs. Not drawing very much, however; no wire.

Best band in Chicago now for my money is Artie Starck, playing at the walkathon. Trumpets: Charley Gray, Sam Devin; reeds: Artie Starck, Fred Brown, Leon Gray; piano, Jerry Wilson; drums: Roy Slaughter; bass: Jap Allan; trombone: George Hunt, old Basie man who recorded the famous "One O'Clock Jump" trombone solo. Band very easy-playing and lots of jamming.... Red Saunders still at the De Lisa.

Bill Kolax, very fine trumpet player, and his marvelous little combination are out of the Club 65. Bass player John Leedy is heading a five-piece unit there now, with Jimmy Wood, piano; Russ Gillam, trumpet; Hilliard Brown, drums; and John Hartzfield, tenor. Kolax gigging on the South Side with his big band. -- Donel O'Brien.

DEAD SILENCE REPORTED IN OHIO

CLEVELAND, Dec. 7. -- All of the Cleveland hotels feature a champagne hour, with a magnum of Mumm's going to the happy couple doing the best version of the Maxixe or something. The bands in these gilded halls of folly are strictly mickey from mouse with glissing brass and vibes and electric guitars. In fact jazz has fallen to an estate which I compute roughly as minus zero. Even the good old Cabin Club which featured a six-piece combo from Dixie (Hunger also, my opinion) and was the spot of many local jams here in the past, has yielded up the spirit and now has a tango-rhumba outfit, maracas and all. -- J. B.

NEW YORK THIS WEEK

(Continued from Page One)

van's success with his black and white band had encouraged Mezzrow to try again, comes a report that one of the country's most popular colored saxophonists will quit his present leader to form a mixed orchestra... Other rumors have several night spots 'round the Fifties closing their doors very soon.

Bobby Byrne continues at Brooklyn Roseland. Basie will show at the Manhattan Center Sunday. George Auld, at the Roseland, has four new men: Henry Adler on drums, George Horvath, bass, Ronny Perry, sax, and Jimmy Morreale, trumpet. J. Dorsey plays the White Plains Center this Sunday.

Following Charlie Barnet's very successful run at the 125th Street Apollo, Bunny Berigan opens there for a week, tonight (Friday). Jack Jenney's orchestra replaces Bernie at the Fiesta on December 14. Joe Marsala's band is being held over until mid-January.

Out of town notes: Charlie Barnet, Red Norvo and Mildred Bailey are due at the Worcester Municipal Auditorium this Sunday. Jimmy Dorsey hits Louisville, Kentucky, the 20th. Joe Venuti opens at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis on New Year's Eve. Harlan Leonard's K.C. Rockets, set to go on tour under MCA, may sign to record for Decca.

COMMODORE RELEASES NEW RECORD

(Continued from Page One)

My Jelly Roll, are to be issued later.

Personnel for this session was: Max Kaminsky, cornet; Brad Gowans, valve trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Joe Bushkin, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Artie Shapiro, bass; and George Wettling, drums.

Milton Gabler, head of the Commodore, announced that these discs represent an attempt to demonstrate what New Orleans tunes sound like when played by musicians associated with the Chicago style.